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REVIEWS

Germany Since 1740. By George Madison Priest. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1915. Pp. xvi + 199. Price \$1.25.

The German Empire Between Two Wars, A Study of the Political and Social Development of the Nation between 1871 and 1914. By Robert Herndon Fife, Jr. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1916. Pp. xi + 400. Price \$1.50.

Both of these books are deserving of favorable presentation to the readers of this journal; they belong to the few written on this subject since the war which are fitted to be recommended by teachers to their students. Neither book has been conceived with a propagandist purpose; neither employs the arts of rhetoric to awaken prejudice or misguide intelligence. Both are sane and useful treatments of their subjects, written in a fluent and pleasing style. The books do not present the German view of their case, but a distinctly American attitude, as will appear presently.

The first named book attempts the difficult task of giving the history of Germany from the accession of Frederick II in 1740 to the present time, within the narrow compass of 184 pages. Had the publishers allowed twice the space, the book might have quadrupled its usefulness for teachers and students. The author has cleverly performed the task of selecting and grouping his material. The age of Frederick the Great and Maria Theresa is sketched in war and peace, and followed by the decline and degradation of Germany down to 1808. The regeneration of Prussia and the purging process of the War of Liberation are well told, and we pass on to the chapter "The German Confederation and the Period of Reaction 1815-1848." The best chapter in the book is perhaps the ninth, the popular struggle for constitutional liberty and national unity 1848-1863. After that, in three more chapters, the author departs from his strictly objective point of view, and inserts too strongly, though perhaps unconsciously, his own interpretation of events. In the chapters "The Founding of the German Empire to the Fall of Bismarck" and "Germany under William II," the author is frequently guilty of dogmatic utterances which detract from the value of his book. Instances are his inaccurate account of the Ems dispatch (p. 115), his summary (p. 123) in which the German people, through the founding of the Empire "by force," are represented as "having lost the sublimest inspiration of German life and thought, faith in the power of ideals, etc." We read on p. 134: "Thus the political will of the German people is directed and driven by a few, who compose the Government, along the way which the Government prescribes." These judgments sound like the crystallized opinion of the partisan editorial room, not the decision of the judicial historian. How far Mr. Priest is distant from an understanding of Modern Germany is shown by his off-hand attitude toward modern German literature and art. We are

told (p. 140): "For nearly a generation after the middle of the nineteenth century German literature presents hardly a name of international reputation," though his own paraphrase of Klee's outline of German literature might be used to refute this statement. Richard Wagner's greatest work falls within this period, whose development of the musical drama represents the artistic climax of the century. There are discerning critics to whom the Bismarck statue in Hamburg and the Leipzig monument (p. 172) do not give the impression of crude colossal proportions, but of indestructible foundations, unshakable solidity, confident power, and high, unswerving purpose. The loss of ideals cannot be charged against modern German art. Though the line of beauty is frequently overstepped,—virility, daring, indomitable spirit, intense truth-seeking, struggle for expression in unconventional design and coloring.

A very different study of Modern Germany is contained in the book "Germany between two Wars." A shorter period, 1871-1914, is wisely chosen, and the author does not speak in formulas likely to favor the bias of a large number of people. His work gives evidence of personal contact with his subject; he has not turned the spy-glass around the wrong way, so that the objects in sight appear thousands of miles away, he has cast the spy-glass aside and allowed the objects to impress him from a close view. Though he confesses to have looked through spectacles, they are his own,—they are American spectacles.

What manner of vision is it, that results from the use of these American glasses? It is this, that they measure the grade of civilization by the degree of parliamentary government to which a nation has attained. Professor Fife cannot help expressing every now and then his disappointment at what he calls "political immaturity," the lack of complete representation of the people in the government of the nation. Many of these strictures are admitted by candid Germans, but they are more than hopeful, that growth in this direction will come in the process of time, indeed that it will be greatly accelerated by this war. It must be remembered that Germany, as all other states of Europe, has to contend with strong traditions of the past, just as European cities have to tear down the century-old buildings, widen the crooked streets in order to allow light and air to penetrate the deepest recesses. Politically, the American people had no such tight traditions to contend with. But, in the matter of unifying the people of the nation, where both countries have met similar and equally great difficulties, Germany has gone ahead more rapidly than the United States. The most glaring example of this has been the unification and codification of criminal and common law, a subject omitted in Professor Fife's book. The "Bürgerliches Gesetz Buch" of 1900, the only scientific common law code ever devised, applying now to all parts of the German Empire, is a model of its kind, and has been imitated by Japan and Switzerland. In the United States, however, each individual state has its own particularistic laws, and confusion reigns supreme. The intelligent German cannot understand why the sensible American people will put up with such a state of things, as little as the intelligent American will comprehend

why the intellectual German people tolerate backward political conditions. As to the important questions of democracy and free institutions, the German people will answer that their socialized state, protecting labor and insuring the stability of the family, is a nearer approach to true democracy than anything that has yet been seen in the world's history; that the much-berated militarism, i.e. universal military service, is the greatest democratizing principle that has yet been devised in Europe; that freedom of speech exists as nowhere else at the shrine of the German University; that universal education, whether it be by public or private school matters little, has practically been accomplished. Germany stands at the head of nations, measured by the standard of the literacy test. These facts are not altogether concealed in the work before us.

Professor Fife's book treats the subject topically. There is no chronological scheme showing the development of Modern Germany from decade to decade. The danger of his method is, that materials must now and then be repeated, but the advantage overweighs,—that of added interest. The author treats of subjects in every chapter which the American people are glad, or even eager, to know about, and his chapter-headings represent particular questions which are asked every day and concerning which he offers instruction and enlightenment. There are four parts to the book: "The Empire Abroad"; "The Empire at Home;" "The Empire's Problems;" "Transformations and Tendencies." Under the first head the foreign policy of the German Empire is reviewed historically, Bismarck's masterful hand succeeds in allying Germany with Austria, Italy, and also Russia, which isolates France, and makes her "revanche" impossible. The loosening of the traditional bond with Russia came not so much as a result of mistakes in the foreign policy of William II as by the clash of interests in the Balkans. The growing commercial rivalry with England is well depicted in Chapter III, and the author justifies any live country in the ambition to expand its commerce and develop colonies. However, it is too soon to settle the question as to what started the bitterness between the two blood-related nations, whether "Pan-Germanism" or journalistic indiscretions in England, or the "Made in Germany" act.

"Germany at Home" is one of the most interesting parts of the book, and here the author has his material well in hand. The government and the parties, the feudal aspects of the East Prussian landed aristocracy, their struggle with the industrial interests, are as good chapters as can be found in English on these subjects.

Equally interesting is the discussion of the tendencies of the social-democratic party in Chapter 9. Its negative attitude, and positive achievement in social reforms is given due space. The subjects of church and state, the conquered provinces, and the Polish question are deftly handled from a critical point of view.

The German city government, generally recognized as a model of business administration, is discussed in Chapters 13 and 14, educational problems in the two succeeding. Chapter 17, on the press and public opinion, is full

of suggestive comparisons with conditions in other countries. Granting their deficiency as news-gathering agencies, we must concede that German newspapers also lack some of the most glaring faults of modern journalism, the craving for sensational revelations, the commercializing of journalistic ideals and editorial pens, the garbling of truth for the sake of what is called a good story, the tendency to absorb the public interest to the exclusion of more serious, scientific, or literary publications.

The author's decision to omit all references to sources of information, detracts from the authoritative impression upon the thoughtful reader, and the absence of a bibliography will no doubt be regretted by teachers and students. Nevertheless, they may turn to "Germany between Two Wars" with confidence as a work of high merit.

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The Spanish American Reader, by Ernesto Nelson. D. C. Heath and Co., 1916. xiii + 367 pp., \$1.25.

Short Stories for Oral Spanish, by Anna Woods Ballard and Charles O. Stewart. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916. xi + 115 pp., 80 cents.

Mr. Ernesto Nelson's Reader fulfils a desire long felt and often expressed by teachers of Spanish for a text book containing reliable reading material concerning Latin America. The editor, who is a prominent educator of the Argentine Republic, has an intimate knowledge of South and Central America, and by virtue of his residence in this country, is able to emphasize those features which will prove most profitable and interesting to a North American audience. The text covers a wide range of topics such as Spanish American industries, geography, institutions, customs, statesmen and literature, concluding with an eloquent presentation of *el ideal americano*. The first part is written in dialogue form by Mr. Nelson, and the remainder of the book is made up of extracts from Latin American and Spanish writers.

Generally speaking, the foot-notes have been made with good judgment although some teachers will probably feel that certain phrases should have been explained while the translation of others was unnecessary. The "variant" expressions included in the foot-notes are particularly commendable from the standpoint of teaching syntax and of enlarging the vocabulary. The proof reading has been done with care, and the few misprints, such as *Ticino* for *Ficino* (p. 303) are readily recognized and easily corrected.

The editor assumes that students will be acquainted with "the rudimentary principles of Spanish grammatical construction" and with the vocabulary of "simple everyday speech" before attempting to use this book. He, therefore, omits from the vocabulary such words as the student might reasonably be expected to know. I believe that many teachers would like to see texts for the work of the third year, and this book could hardly be used to advantage